

FINAL DECISION DOCUMENTATION and DECISION RATIONALE

**South McCully Timber Sale Harvest and Riparian Restoration Plan**

Environmental Assessment Number OR080-01-05

Tract No. 02-501

USDI - Bureau of Land Management  
Oregon State Office, Salem District, Cascades Resource Area

Sections 31, Township 9 South, Range 2 East; and  
Sections 5 and 7, Township 10 South, Range 2 East, Willamette Meridian

Linn County, Oregon

I. BACKGROUND

In 2000 and 2001 an IDT (interdisciplinary team) analyzed approximately 377 acres managed by the Cascades Resource Area, Salem District, BLM (Bureau of Land Management) for a timber harvest proposal. These stands analyzed are located within the Thomas Creek Watershed and Middle North Santiam Watershed. An environmental analysis was conducted and documented in the South McCully Timber Harvest and Riparian Restoration Plan Environmental Assessment (EA) Number OR080-01-05. Approximately 229 acres were dropped from further analysis at various stages in the process, as described in section II.D. of the EA. The EA documented a proposal to partial cut harvest approximately 148 acres, including: 84 acres within the GFMA (Matrix) Land Use Allocation (LUA), 59 acres within the Connectivity (Matrix) LUA, and thin approximately 5 acres in Riparian Reserves in conjunction with the timber sale. The proposed action also included topping trees to create snag habitat in the uplands and Riparian Reserve, felling trees to create Class 1 coarse woody debris (CWD) in the uplands and Riparian Reserve, and felling trees to create stream channel structure. Temporary road construction, road renovation, and road decommissioning were also part of the proposal. A Finding of No Significant Impact was signed on July 12, 2001 and the EA and FONSI were made available for public review on July 13, 2001.

Since the release of the EA, the IDT has identified the need to update some information after further field reconnaissance. These changes to the proposed action are described in the following section which also describes any changes to the analysis and determination of effects as presented in the July 12, 2001 EA.

## II. MODIFICATIONS TO THE PROPOSED ACTION / CHANGES TO AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

### 1. Changes to the Proposed Action

- a. *Unit acres* - Unit acres have been finalized based on unit traverse and sale layout. **Table 1a** shows the changes in unit numbers and acres.

<b>Table 1a: Changes in Unit Numbers and Acres</b>					
<b>Unit Numbers</b>		<b>Harvest Method</b>	<b>Acres</b>		
<b>Contract</b>	<b>EA</b>		<b>Contract</b>	<b>EA</b>	<b>Change</b>
1	A	Partial Cut - Commercial Thinning	44	59	(15)
2	E-5	Partial Cut - Commercial Thinning	9	18	(9)
3	E-1	Partial Cut - Commercial Thinning	43	53	(10)
	Rip Res Thin	Partial Cut - Thinning/Individual Tree Selection	2	5	(3)
4	B	Partial Cut - Individual Tree Selection	10	13	(3)
<i>Partial Cut (PC) Commercial Thinning - units 1, 2, 3</i>			96	130	(34)
<i>Partial Cut (PC) Thinning/Individual Tree Select - Riparian Reserve</i>			2	5	(3)
<i>Partial Cut (PC) Individual Tree Selection - unit 4</i>			10	13	(3)
<b>Total</b>			108	148	(40)

- b. *Timber volume* - Final timber volume estimates for the sale have been determined through a field timber cruise. From Matrix lands the Cruised volume is 2489 hundred cubic feet (CCF), an increase of 58 CCF over estimates made for the EA. An additional 52 CCF to be removed was cruised in Riparian Reserve (no estimate of volume was made in the EA.). Appendix A shows unit volumes.
- c. *Logging Systems* - Ground based logging decreased from 126 acres estimated in the EA to 97 acres in the contract. Cable yarding decreased from 18 acres estimated in the EA to 9 acres in the contract. In addition, 5 acres of potential log removal from the Riparian Reserve were estimated in the EA without specifying logging methods. This was reduced to 2 acres in the contract to be yarded with ground based equipment and special restrictions on operations were added to the requirements for yarding in the rest of the harvest area.

- d. *Road Maintenance/Renovation* - No specific estimates of road maintenance and renovation needs were made in the EA. The contract includes: 2.43 miles of roadside brushing, resurface 0.45 mile, spot rock 2.02 miles, replace 10 culverts, install 4 new culverts, and repair one culvert. These may be adjusted slightly during contract operations as changing needs become apparent.
- e. *Fuels Treatment* - Acres of slashing and broadcast underburning reduced from 13 acres to 10 acres due to layout of unit 4.

## 2. Changes to the Project Design Features/Mitigation Measures

- a. *Reserve Trees* - Nine seed trees (Plus Trees) reserved, number not identified in EA.

## 3. Changes to the Environmental Consequences

### a. Soils and Water

- i) *Cable Yarding*: Reducing the number of cable yarded acres from 18 in the EA to 9 in the timber sale contract would reduce non-mitigated compaction and loss of productivity on the proposed sale area proportionally.
- ii) *Ground Based Yarding*: Reducing the number of ground based yarded acres from 126 in the EA to 97 in the timber sale contract would reduce non-mitigated compaction and loss of productivity on the proposed sale area proportionally.
- iii) *Roads*: Short term increases in sediment produced as a result of culvert installation, replacement and repair could occur, but would not be likely since all work would be done during the dry season.
- iv) *Water Quality*: No change in water quality or riparian shade would be anticipated under the listed modifications.
- v) *Cumulative Impacts*: Cumulative impacts would be lower under this modification than originally analyzed in the EA. When compared to the EA, changes in Water Available For Runoff (WAR), and Equivalent Clearcut Acreage (ECA) would be reduced proportional to the reduction in acres.

### III. DECISION

Based on site-specific analysis in the Environmental Assessment, the supporting project record, management recommendations contained in the Watershed Analysis (Thomas Creek) dated December, 1996, as well as the management direction contained in the RMP (*Salem District Resource Management Plan*), dated May, 1995, I have decided to implement the Proposed Action described in the South McCully Timber Harvest and Riparian Restoration Plan Environmental Assessment (EA # OR080-01-05) (EA pp. 8-17, with the modifications in Section II -1 and 2, above, hereafter referred to as the “selected action ” (see attached map). Management Activities by Harvest Method are shown in Appendix A.

The following is a summary of this decision.

1. Harvest approximately 108 acres from GFMA, Connectivity and Riparian Reserve Land Use Allocations for an expected yield of 2541 hundred cubic feet (CCF) ( 1501 MBF). The following is a description of harvest acres and timber volumes by harvest method.
  - a. *Commercial thinning* (Partial Cut) of approximately 96 acres of Matrix lands from 3 units (Units 1, 2, 3 ). It is expected that this will yield approximately 2266 hundred cubic feet (CCF).
  - b. *Individual tree selection*: Partial cut approximately 10 acres from one unit (Unit 4). It is expected that this will yield approximately 223 hundred cubic feet (CCF).
  - c. *Riparian Reserve*: Individual tree selection thinning of approximately 2 acres within Riparian Reserve in unit 3. It is expected that this will yield approximately 52 hundred cubic feet (CCF).<sup>1</sup>
2. Tree Topping: Approximately 250 trees would be topped within the project area for snag creation.
3. Road Maintenance and Renovation: Road maintenance and renovation (brushing, blading, resurfacing, spot rocking, culvert installation, replacement and repair) would occur on approximately four miles of existing road. These activities would take place within the current road prism.

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<sup>1</sup> Does not count toward Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ)

4. Road decommissioning: Approximately 3283 feet of existing roads would be decommissioned. Approximately 250 feet of road to be constructed would be decommissioned after completion of logging operations. Decommissioned roads would be blocked.
5. Compliance with Direction

The selected action is consistent with applicable land use plans, policies, and programs (EA, p. 3).

- a. Programmatic documents covering this proposal are the:
  - *Record of Decision for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and Other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (ROD, January, 2001), Salem District Resource Management Plan (May 1995),*
  - *Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994), and the*
  - *Western Oregon Program-Management of Competing Vegetation Record of Decision (August 1992).*

All of these documents may be reviewed at the Cascades Resource Area office.

- b. Monitoring activities related to this sale will be done as described in Appendix J of the RMP (May, 1995).

#### IV. DECISION RATIONALE

Considering public comment, the content of the EA and supporting project record, the management recommendations contained in the Thomas Creek Watershed Analysis, and the management direction contained in the RMP, I have decided to implement the selected action as described above. My rationale for this decision follows:

The selected action addresses the identified purpose and need for action in that it will:

- a. Contribute to meeting the need for a sustainable supply of timber by immediately making over 2,500 CCF available and managing these forest stands to provide a long term sustainable supply of timber.
- b. Contribute to meeting the need for a healthy forest ecosystem by speeding the development of desirable ecosystem components which are currently lacking due to past management practices.
- c. Adequately protect the watershed while meeting other objectives.
- d. Not preclude the recovery of any listed species nor contribute to the need to list a species.

The “No Action” alternative, and alternatives which were dropped from further consideration during the development of the proposed action would not satisfactorily fulfill the Purpose and Need for action, EA p. 1.

## V. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT/ CONSULTATION/COORDINATION

### 1. Scoping

A description of the proposal was included in the Salem Bureau of Land Management *Project Update* which is mailed to more than 900 individuals and organizations four times each year. A letter asking for scoping input on the proposal was mailed on April 28, 1999 to approximately 17 adjacent landowners and individuals who have expressed an interest in management activities in the resource area as a whole or in this drainage.

Letters were also sent to the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde; Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon; eight federal, State, county and local government organizations; three municipal water supply officers; seven interested groups and the North Santiam Watershed Forum.

### 2. Comment Period and Comments

The EA was mailed to approximately 47 agencies, individuals and organizations on July 13, 2001. A legal notice was placed in local newspapers soliciting public input on the action from July 14 to August 15, 2001. Two comment letters were received:

- Vince Brand, Frank Lumber Company, In favor of proceeding with the timber sale.
- George Sexton, American Lands Alliance, Expressed specific concerns.

Responses to these comments can be found in the *Response to Public Comments Received on the South McCully Timber Harvest and Riparian Restoration Plan* in the South McCully project file.

### 3. Consultation/Coordination

The South McCully timber sale was submitted for Formal Consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as provided in Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16U.S.C. 1536 (a)(2) and (a)(4) as amended). Consultation was completed on February 14, 2000 (Reference number 1-7-00-F-155). As a result of consultation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service found that the sale would not likely jeopardize the continued existence of the spotted owl.

## VI. CONCLUSION

I have determined that change to the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI - July 2001) for the South McCully Timber Sale is not necessary for these reasons:

The existing EA for the South McCully Timber Sale, along with additional information contained in this document, fully covers the project. There are no significant new circumstances or facts relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the modification to the proposed action or its impacts which were not addressed in the EA. The action is within the scope of the alternatives identified in the original EA, and the environmental impacts are within those described in the original EA and are less than or the same as those anticipated for the proposed action in that assessment.

### Protests

In accordance with Forest Management Regulations at 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for this timber sale will not become effective or be open to formal protest until the Notice of Sale is published "in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the lands affected by the decision are located". Protests of this sale must be filed within 15 days of the first publication of the notice. For this project, the Notice of Sale will be published in the *Salem Statesman Journal* on or around March 01, 2002. The planned sale date is March 27, 2002.

### Contact Person

For additional information concerning this decision or the BLM protest process, contact Keith Walton (503) 375-5676, Carolyn Sands (503) 315-5973 or Bob Hershey (503) 315-5931, Cascades Resource Area, Salem BLM, 1717 Fabry SE, Salem, Oregon 97306.

Approved by:



Richard Prather

Cascades Resource Area Field Manager

29 FEB 2002

Date



## APPENDIX A: Unit Information and Project Design Features of the Selected Action by Harvest Method

Unit Information and Project Design Features of the Selected Action						
Unit Information	Unit 1 (A)	Unit 2 (E-5)	Unit 3 (E-1)	Unit 3 Rip Res	Unit 4 (B)	Total
Stand Age	65 years	60 years			Uneven age.	
Dominant Species	Douglas-fir - dominant; minor components of grand fir, western hemlock and western redcedar. Scattered Old Growth Douglas-fir.				Dougla s-fir, western hemlock	
Trees per acre prior to harvest	94	187	187	227	50	
Estimated trees per acre after harvest	55	110	110	95	39	
Harvest Method	Commercial thinning			Individual tree selection		
Unit Acres and Volume						
Harvest Acres	44	9	43	2	10	108
Cruised Volume (ccf - hundred cubic feet)	882	273	1110	52	223	2540
Cruised Volume (mbf - thousand board feet)	546	153	633	29	139	1500

United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

**TIMBER SALE CONTRACT MAP**

T. 9 S., R. 2 E., Section 31 and T. 10 S., R. 2 E., Sections 5 &amp; 7, W.M. SALEM DISTRICT- OREGON

Tract NO. 02-501  
South McCully**EXHIBIT A**